



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/848,140	05/03/2001	Hideyo Osanai	134.136	7450
7590	06/19/2006			EXAMINER DINH, TUAN T
JAMES H. PATTERSON PATTERSON, THUENTE, SKAAR & CHRISTENSEN, P.A. 4800 IDS CENTER 80 SOUTH 8TH STREET MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402-2100			ART UNIT 2841	PAPER NUMBER
DATE MAILED: 06/19/2006				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/848,140	OSANAI ET AL.
	Examiner Tuan T. Dinh	Art Unit 2841

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 April 2006.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-7 and 23-34 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-7 and 23-34 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Noted of the claimed language:

Examiner is considered the term “adapted to” as well defined as an intended use limitation. The claim limitation that employ phrases of the type “adapted to” is typical of claim limitation which may not distinguish over prior art according to the principle. It has been held that the recitation that *an element is “adapted to” perform or is “capable of being”* performing a function is not a positive limitation but only requires the ability to so perform, see *In re Venezia*, 189 USPQ (CCPA 1976).

Claim Objections

1. Claims 23-24 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 23, line 5, is unclear. The phrase of “a ceramic substrate of planar plate” is not understood. Does applicant mean of “a ceramic substrate formed of a planar plate or a ceramic substrate is formed on the planar plate”?

Please, clarify.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-2, 4-7, 23-24, 26-27, and 29-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang (U. S. Patent 4,531,044) in view of Baba et al. (U. S. Patent 4,284,437), and further in view of Edwards et al. (U.S. Patent 5,650,662).

As to claims 1, 4-6, Chang disclose a metal-ceramic circuit board as shown in figures 3 and 8 comprising

a aluminum alloy base plate (16, column 4, line 9) and a ceramic substrate board (15, column 4, line 5) made of alumina (column 4, lines 23-29), wherein one surface (a bottom surface) of the ceramic substrate board (15) is bonded directly to the aluminum base plate (16), see figure 3, the aluminum base plate (16) having a thickness not smaller than 1mm, see column 4, lines 32-34.

Chang does not disclose the aluminum alloy base plate having a proof stress not higher than 320Mpa.

Baba et al. show a aluminum alloy base plate having a proof stress not higher than 320Mpa, see column 4, lines 22-42, column 7, line 8, and also, see tables 2 and 6.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ a proof stress (yielding strength) not higher than 320Mpa of a aluminum/aluminum alloy base plate in the metal-ceramic circuit board of Chang,

as taught by Baba et al., in order to provide a maximum deflection and anti breaking strengths of the metal base of the circuit board.

Chang and Baba do not show the ceramic substrate bonded directly to the base plate without any intervening material.

Edward et al. teach a technique of direct bonding between a heat spreader (16) and a ceramic layer (22) of a substrate (14) as shown in figures 1-4 without any intervening material therebetween, column 4, lines 48-65.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have a teaching of Edwards employ the circuit board of Chang and Baba in order to direct transfer heat.

As to claim 2, Chang disclose the board as shown in figures 3 and 8 wherein the other surface (a top surface) of the ceramic substrate board (15) has a metal conductive member (14, column 4, lines 4-5).

As to claims 7 23-24, 26, Chang disclose a module (column 1, line 57) as shown in figures 3 and 8 comprising

a aluminum alloy base plate (16),

a ceramic substrate board (15), and the base plate (16) having an area larger than the substrate board (15)

a semiconductor tip (14), wherein one surface of the ceramic substrate (15) board is bonded directly to the base plate (16), said semiconductor tip (14) is provided on the other surface of said ceramic substrate board (15), the aluminum base plate (16) having a thickness not smaller than 1mm, see column 4, lines 32-34.

Chang does not disclose the aluminum alloy base plate having a proof stress not higher than 320Mpa.

Baba et al. show a aluminum alloy base plate having a proof stress not higher than 320Mpa, see column 4, lines 22-42, column 7, line 8, and also, see tables 2 and 6.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ a proof stress (yielding strength) not higher than 320Mpa of a aluminum/aluminum alloy base plate in the metal-ceramic circuit board of Chang, as taught by Baba et al., in order to provide a maximum deflection and anti breaking strengths of the metal base of the circuit board.

Chang and Baba do not show the ceramic substrate bonded directly to the base plate without any intervening material.

Edward et al. teach a technique of direct bonding between a heat spreader (16) and a ceramic layer (22) of a substrate (14) as shown in figures 1-4 without any intervening material therebetween, column 4, lines 48-65.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have a teaching of Edwards employ the circuit board of Chang and Baba in order to direct transfer heat.

As to claim 27, Chang discloses the base plate made of aluminum alloy acts as a heat sink.

As to claims 29-34, Chang and Baba disclose the circuit or the power module adapted to withstand a thermal cycle test of at least 1000 or 3000 times.

4. Claims 3, 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang ('044), Baba et al. ('437), and Edwards ('662) as applied to claims 1-2, and 4-7 above, and further in view of Nagase et al. (U. S. Patent 6,033,787).

Chang, Baba, and Edwards disclose all of the limitations of the claimed invention, except for the conductive member made by a material selected from copper/copper alloy, and aluminum/aluminum alloy.

Nagase et al. shows a metal conductive member (11) made of aluminum material bonded on a ceramic substrate (13), see figure 1.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ a metal conductive member made of aluminum on the substrate of Chang, Baba, and Edwards, as taught by Nagase et al. for the purpose of improving a thermal conductivity and heat resistance.

5. Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chang in view of Baba and Edwards as applied to claims 23-27, and 22-24 above, and further in view of Prior Art (submitted by applicant, figure 5).

Regarding claim 28, Chang, Baba, and Edwards do not specific disclose the conductive member bonded on the surface of the substrate board by using a brazing material.

APA-figure 5 shows a conductive member (8) bonded on a substrate board (2) by using a brazing material.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have a teaching of APA employed in the circuit board of Chang, Baba, and Edwards in order to provide a flexure for the circuit board without damaging components mounted on the board.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-7, and 23-34 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Applicant argues:

The combination of Chang, Baba, and Edwards fails to disclose all of the limitations of the claimed invention (for example, claims 1 and 7).

Examiner disagrees because Chang discloses the ceramic substrate (15) board is bonded to the surface of the aluminum base plate (16), the aluminum base plate (16) having a thickness not smaller than 1mm (means greater than 1 mm), see column 4, lines 32-34.

Baba teaches aluminum alloy sheet having a thickness of 2 mm having a proof stress not higher than 320Mpa (means less than 320Mpa), see column 4, lines 27-42.

Since Chang had the thickness of the aluminum plate being greater than 1 mm, it can be 2 or more than 2 mm. Thus, the teaching of Baba to conclude the properties of the aluminum sheet or plate having a thickness of 2 mm falls in a range of less than 320Mpa that prove the Chang reference can have the proof stress of less than 320Mpa with in a range of 2 mm.

Therefor the combination of Chang in view of Baba is proper.

Edwards teaches a direct bonded of a metal base plate (16) to a portion (20) of a ceramic substrate (14) without any intervening material. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have a teaching of Edwards employ the circuit board of Chang in order to direct transfer heat.

Thus, in the explanation as above, the examiner believes the combination is proper.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tuan T. Dinh whose telephone number is 571-272-1929. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kammie Cuneo can be reached on 571-272-1957. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Tuan Dinh
June 06, 2006.